

Accused Slayer Of King Seized at London Airport

By JEREMIAH O'LEARY
Star Staff Writer

James Earl Ray, accused slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was arrested today in London.

The 40-year-old fugitive was seized by Scotland Yard operatives at 11:15 a.m. (7:15 EDT) as he disembarked from an airliner en route from Lisbon, Portugal, to Brussels, Belgium. Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover announced.

The FBI, which has sought Ray since King's death April 4 in Memphis, Tenn., said Ray had a snub-nosed, fully loaded revolver in his hip pocket when British police made the arrest. Ray was arrested on the basis of information furnished Scotland Yard by the FBI.

An announcement by Scotland Yard said Ray was charged with possessing a forged passport and possessing a firearm without a certificate.

Ray was wearing a light raincoat, sports jacket and gray trousers.

He was traveling with a Canadian passport listing him as Ramon George Sneyd. The FBI said he obtained the Canadian passport April 24 in Ottawa, Canada, where he apparently fled after King's assassination.

The arrest was announced as King's widow was attending funeral services for Sen. Robert F. Kennedy in New York.



JAMES EARL RAY

Hoover said Ray had been traced by the FBI to Canada and that he had flown to London May 7 with a round-trip ticket. In London, Ray had cashed the unused part of the ticket in exchange for a ticket to Lisbon and a voucher for the difference of \$14.00.

Last night, Ray boarded an airliner in the Portuguese capital, checked his luggage through to Brussels and stopped in London only as part of a refueling stop.

The FBI, already aware of the false identity he had assumed, had alerted Scotland Yard to watch for anyone using the name Ramon George Sneyd.

The arrest came when Scotland Yard detectives checked the passenger list of the Lisbon to Brussels airplane at Heath Row International Airport in London.

The FBI said Ray's extradition to the United States will be sought on the basis of the murder charge filed against him by the State of Tennessee rather than the federal fugitive and civil.

See RAY, Page A-5

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ENCLOSURE

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Suspect Is Captured In Slaying of King

Continued From Page A-1

11 rights warrants outstanding against him.

According to information reaching here, Ray refused to admit his identity but he was identified quickly by British police from fingerprints taken after his arrest. Ray is being held in London's Canon Row police station under maximum guard.

Washington officials said they understood he would be arraigned on the British charges against him on Monday and that extradition proceedings would be started as soon as possible.

Hoover said the arrest was the result of close cooperation between the FBI, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Scotland Yard. The FBI had lost Ray's trail in the first several weeks after the murder of Dr. King, but picked up his scent again after routine checks of all passports issued in the United States and Canada.

Ray had applied for and obtained the Canadian passport under the name of Sneyd, using the name of one Paul Bridgeman of Toronto as a reference.

Hoover said no Paul Bridgeman had been located in Toronto, but that was the name of one of Ray's fellow prisoners in the Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City, Mo. Ray himself apparently used the name Paul Bridgeman during his stay in Toronto before flying to London on May 7.

He had continued his old habits of living in cheap boarding houses and frequenting bars during his stay in Canada, FBI agents learned. The pursuit of Ray intensified in mid-May when the FBI learned that he had gone to the Canadian Embassy in Lisbon to apply for a second passport under the name of Sneyd, saying that the first one had been spoiled.

Ray had been the object of an intensive, worldwide manhunt since King's death, even before the FBI knew the true identity of the man they sought. The accused sniper had left a confused network of false identities behind him from the day in April 1967 when he escaped from the Missouri prison until his arrest today.

The first alias he used was Eric Starvo Galt, under which name he traveled to Canada in the summer of 1967 and bought the white Mustang that linked him with the King slaying.

When the suspect bought the presumed murder weapon, a

Remington-Union City 30.06 pump gun, in Birmingham, Ala., on March 30, 1968, he used the name of Harvey Lowmyer. And when he registered in the Memphis flophouse several hours before Dr. King was fatally wounded on the balcony of the nearby Lorraine Motel on April 4, he was calling himself John Willard, the FBI said.

It was not until the white Mustang was located in Atlanta, Ga., parked near the state capital building, on April 11, that the name of Galt entered the investigation. FBI agents already knew that an Eric S. Galt had registered at the Rebel Motel in Memphis the night before King's murder but had not been able to connect him with the crime.

Registration of the car in Alabama gave investigators the name of Galt but a week went by before the FBI determined that this, too, was a false identity.

The FBI found that a man using the name Galt had traveled to Canada, Mexico, the Los Angeles area and New Orleans in a 19,000-mile journey from September, 1967 until early April, 1968. FBI agents located photographs of "Galt" at a bartending school in Los Angeles, in possession of a Mexican prostitute in Puerto Vallarta, and at the home of a Los Angeles girl to whom the suspect had written a lonely-hearts letter.

But it was not until April 18 that the FBI determined that the fugitive's real name was James Earl Ray.